

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7669
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
USINT CAIRO
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 2055

E. O. 11 6&0 GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, IS

SUBJECT: PROPOSED STUDY OF ISRAELI POLICY IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

REF: STATE 46688 NOTAL

1. EMBASSY OPPOSES VISIT TO ISRAEL ASPECT OF DEPARTMENT'S PROPOSAL OF AWARDED EXTERNAL RESEARCH GRANT TO DR BERNARD REICH OF GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY FOR STUDY OF ISRAELI POLICY OPTIONS IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL TRENDS IN ISRAEL'S OCCUPATION, AND INTERACTION BETWEEN ISRAELI AND PALESTINIAN ARAB POPULATIONS (REFTEL). REASONS ARE AS FOLLOWS.

2. EMBASSY BELIEVES ISRAELIS WOULD SEEK TO EXPLOIT USG COMMISSIONING OF STUDY OF THIS KIND BY PUBLICIZING FACT THAT US SENT SPECIAL TWO- MAN RESEARCH TEAM TO ISRAEL TO INVESTIGATE THESE SUBJECTS. USG COMMISSIONING OF THIS STUDY COULD, AND WOULD, BE CONSTRUED TO MEAN THAT US EXPECTS ISRAELI OCCUPATION TO CONTINUE INTO INDEFINITE FUTURE AND THAT US ACCEPTS PROPOSITION THAT GOI IN MEANTIME RIGHTLY HAS AVAILABLE TO IT A WIDE SPECTRUM OF POLICY OPTIONS IN TERRITORIES, INCLUDING THEIR FURTHER DE FACTO INTEGRATION INTO STATE OF ISRAEL. SENDING OF TEAM TO STUDY THESE SUBJECTS (PRESUMABLY INCLUDING
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INTERVIEWS WITH WEST BANKERS AND IMPORTANT ISRAELI POLITICIANS AND ACADEMICS) COULD PROVIDE MISLEADING SIGNAL AS TO OUR REAL ATTITUDES TOWARD ISRAELI ACTIONS IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES.

3. IT IS CONCEIVABLE THAT SOME OF THESE PITFALLS COULD BE MINIMIZED BY RECASTING PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE. BUT IF STRESS WERE LAID ON WHAT ISRAELIS ADVOCATE AS THEIR POLICY OPTIONS IN THE TERRITORIES AND NOT ON WHAT THEIR POLICY OPTIONS ACTUALLY ARE, NEW PITFALLS WOULD BE CREATED. THIS IS ELECTION YEAR IN ISRAEL, AND ONE OF MOST SENSITIVE AND CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES IS WHAT ISRAEL SHOULD DO ABOUT TERRITORIES AND THEIR POPULATION. VISIT OF TEAM MIGHT WELL BE USED BY ISRAELI PARTISANS TO OWN ENDS, SUCH AS BY CHARGING US INTERFERENCE IN ISRAELI DOMESTIC POLITICS (HAWKS) OR BY HERALDING IMMINENCE OF MAJOR US MIDDLE EAST PEACE INITIATIVE (DOVES).

4. IF STUDY IS CONDUCTED WITHOUT VISIT TO ISRAEL, OBJECTIONS CITED ABOVE WOULD BE MUCH LESS APPLICABLE, ALTHOUGH WE STILL DO NOT SEE PARTICULAR NEED FOR STUDY OF THIS KIND ON UNCLASSIFIED BASIS. IF DECISION IS TO GO AHEAD, EITHER ON UNCLASSIFIED OR CLASSIFIED BASIS, THEN WE WOULD RECOMMEND THAT QUESTIONS TO WHICH ANSWERS NEEDED BY RESEARCHERS BE FORWARDED TO EMBASSY AND CONGEN JERUSALEM FOR ACTION.
ZURHELLEN

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